

NEWS RELEASE

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FORMER EAST ST. LOUIS PRECINCT COMMITTEEMAN SENTENCED IN VOTE-BUYING CONSPIRACY

Edward E. McNally, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today the sentencing in United States District Court of the last of five defendants convicted last June of conspiring to pay voters in East St. Louis in the 2004 federal election.

CHARLES POWELL, Jr., age 62, of East St. Louis, was sentenced to a term of 21 months' imprisonment, a fine of \$2500, a \$100 special assessment, and a two year term of supervised release to follow his incarceration. In June 2005, **POWELL** was convicted, following a 17-day jury trial, of one count of conspiring with others to buy votes. Evidence adduced at trial showed that **POWELL** was the elected Democratic Precinct Committeeman for the 9th Precinct in East St. Louis and the Chairman of the East St. Louis Democratic Party. The evidence further showed that he and certain other Democratic precinct committeemen conspired with each other and with other precinct workers to pay voters for voting in the November 2004 election in amounts ranging from \$5 to \$10 per vote. The evidence further showed that **POWELL** used three precinct committeemen meetings in October 2004, to instruct East St. Louis' Democratic precinct committeemen to use money obtained from the St. Clair County Democratic Party to pay voters for voting in the election. The evidence showed that the three races that the conspirators were attempting to influence were the races for President of the United States, Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court, and Chair of the St. Clair County Board of Commissioners.

POWELL's four codefendants has previously been sentenced for their roles in the conspiracy.

Information for the indictment and convictions was obtained through the cooperative efforts of the United States Attorney's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Postal Service, the Criminal Division of the Internal Revenue Service, and the Illinois State Police.

The vote-buying case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Michael C. Carr and James M. Cutchin.